

Testimony of  
The Connecticut ENT Society  
The Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians (CSEP),  
The Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society (CDS)  
Connecticut Orthopaedic Society  
Connecticut Urology Society  
on

**H.B. No. 5130 AN ACT CONCERNING CLEARANCE OF STUDENT ATHLETES WITH CONCUSSIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN TEAM ACTIVITIES.**

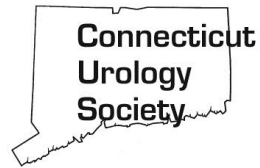
February 19, 2016

Good morning Senator Gerrantana , Rep Ritter and other distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, I am Marc Eisen, a board certified otolaryngologist practicing in Hartford, Connecticut. I am here as an officer of the Connecticut ENT society and on behalf of over 1000 physicians in the medical specialties of ENT, Ophthalmology, Urology and Dermatology to support the testimony of the Connecticut State Medical Society, Connecticut Pediatric Society and CT Neurology Society, the organizations whose members frequently see these patients, who are athletes that suffer from some form of trauma including concussions. For the record, I too have personally seen athletes and have diagnosed concussions from athletic activity.

The specialty medical societies have long believed that the medical diagnoses of a concussion should be by a medical doctor, PA or advanced practice nurse, who have the medical knowledge and training to make such a diagnose and should remain only in their scope of practice. The testimony of these groups should also help determine if the proposal of adding physical therapists to the list of those health care professionals who may clear a student athlete who has suffered a concussion for participation in team activities to be in the best interest of our community.

Concussions in Athletes are not only a hot topic in the news, with the recent major motion picture release of Concussion starring Will Smith, court rooms and in legislatures across the country but are also a great area of concern in the medical community.

So why all the fuss about concussions? To begin with the misdiagnosed of a concussion can lead to death. The brain has the consistency of gelatin. It's



cushioned from everyday jolts and bumps by cerebrospinal fluid inside your skull. A violent blow to your head and neck or upper body can cause your brain to slide back and forth forcefully against the inner walls of your skull.

Sudden acceleration or deceleration of the head, resulting from certain events such as body collision from a tackle or being violently hurdled threw the air, can cause brain injury. These injuries affect brain function, usually for a brief period, resulting in signs and symptoms of concussion, but sometimes these injuries led to bleeding in or around your brain, causing symptoms such as prolonged drowsiness and confusion that may develop right away or later. Such bleeding in the brain can be fatal. That's why anyone who experiences a brain injury needs monitoring in the hours afterward and emergency care if symptoms worsen by a qualified medical professional and someone who is highly trained to identify symptoms that may present down the road after the initial event has occurred. Its as simple as that. An injury that may seem "not so bad" since the person is able to get up and walk off the field can be dead several hours later.

The signs and symptoms of a concussion can be subtle and may not be immediately apparent. Symptoms can last for days, weeks or even longer and have permanent paralysis or they can go away in hours or days with no permanent damage. A second concussion may turn out to be fatal. In light of the complexity of this issue we urge this committee to be prudent in your ability to expand authority and scope of practice especially in regard to the health and wellbeing of our youth and give considerable weight to the recommendations put forward by our pediatric and neurology colleagues.

Thank you for your time and consideration